Remarks

The Examiner has rejected claims 2-8 under 35 U.S.C. 112 as being indefinite. This rejection should be withdrawn especially in view of the claims as amended.

The Examiner as objected to the word "heating" as being unclear with respect to temperature. It is now very clear what the minimum boiling temperature of the solvent is and further that the heating is at a temperature sufficient to effect decarboxylation and saponification of methyl pheophorbide-a to give pheophorbide-a. A person of even minimal skill in the art can thus determine the temperature.

Claims 5-8 have been amended to make clear what is being esterified. The objection on that ground is thus also moot.

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1-3, 5 and 7-8 under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being unpatentable over Brockman et al., Smith et al. and Rungta et al.

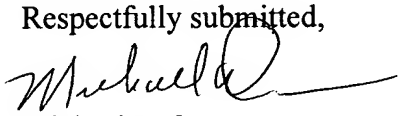
This rejection is inappropriate and should be withdrawn.

At the outset it should be pointed out that claims 1-4 require a high boiling solvent. A high boiling solvent, as defined, is not suggested by any of the cited references or their combination for the purpose of a "one batch " process for obtaining pheophorbide-a from chlorin e_6 trimethyl ester. All prior art, including that cited by the Examiner, requires intermediate isolation before obtaining anything remotely resembling pheophorbide-a from chlorin e_6 trimethyl ester and certainly there is no suggestion that such could be accomplished by using a high boiling (144°C) aromatic solvent.

With respect to claims 5 et seq., none of the cited art suggests a one step process for obtaining purpurin 18 by treating chlorin e_6 trimethyl ester with a base in an aromatic solvent in the presence of air to give purpurin-18. The Examiner's statements with respect to obtaining purpurin 18 from methyl pheophorbide-a prove the point. In the Examiner's cited method, methyl pheophorbide-a was clearly isolated from some source. This clearly does not suggest direct synthesis of purpurin 18 by treating chlorin e_6 trimethyl ester with a base in an aromatic solvent in the presence of air in a one step process.

All rejections should be withdrawn and all claims should be allowed.

Respectfully submitted,



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